

REMARKS**§ 103 Rejections**

Claims 1-13 and 17-19 are rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yokoyama et al. (WO2004/010452) in view of Slaughter, Jr. (US 5462702) and further in view of Hou (NPL: Stamp forming of continuous glass fiber reinforced polypropylene, published 1/20/1997).

Claims 1-2, 8-10 and 17-18 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over HOU (NPL: Stamp forming of continuous glass fiber reinforced polypropylene, previously recorded).

Claim 1 has been amended to recite a favored embodiment, i.e. a mold comprising a support comprising a composite material of a thermoplastic polyolefin polymeric material and 20 to 70 percent volume based on the composite of a glass fiber reinforcing material blended with the polymeric material . . .

As previously argued, the purpose of the reinforcing material is to reduce the coefficient of hygroscopic swelling. As evident by the examples set forth on pp. 16-24, the inclusion of glass fiber in a thermoplastic polyolefin material resulted in a coefficient of hygroscopic swelling of less than 1% as reported in Table 1 of p. 20 and Table 2 of p. 22. However, when the polyolefin was replaced by epoxy resin, the resulting film was “reinforced”, yet no reduction in the coefficient of hygroscopic swelling was evident, as reported in Table 4.

Although glass fiber reinforced polypropylene has been used for other purposes such as thermoforming, as evident by HOU, there is no motivation based on the references cited by the Examiner to select the particular combination presently claimed to obtain the desired low coefficient of hygroscopic swelling. Further, in view of the large number of possible polymeric materials and the large number of possible reinforcing materials, it would take undue experimentation to arrive at the presently claimed invention.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

January 10, 2011

Date

By: /Carolyn A. Fischer/

Carolyn A. Fischer, Reg. No.: 39,091

Telephone No.: 651-575-3915

Office of Intellectual Property Counsel
3M Innovative Properties Company
Facsimile No.: 651-736-3833